



The critical role of follow-up supports

Perhaps the best thing about the Streets to Homes experience to date is that 87% of those housed have remained in their homes. This outstanding result is because of an extensive network of follow-up supports that are delivered by City staff and partner agencies using a consistent approach that focuses on the client, landlord and community. Appropriate supports to newly housed people is something that is emphasized with community partners and continuously developed.

Shelters to Homes

The housing-first approach is at work in Toronto's shelter system as well. The focus is on providing support to clients so they can get into their own homes and be better equipped to connect with communities and possibly the job market. Each year, more than 4,000 households leave the shelter system for permanent housing.

To find out more about Streets to Homes and other programs provided by the City of Toronto to help vulnerable people find and retain their housing, please visit www.toronto.ca/housing



Toronto's plan to end street homelessness



Home is where it starts.

May 2007



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 **TORONTO** Shelter, Support & Housing Administration



Ending street homelessness — one person at a time

Toronto's goal is to end street homelessness. Using a housing-first strategy in place since 2005 that we call Streets to Homes, almost 1,200 people have moved into permanent housing directly from the streets. Most are in the private rental market and most remain in their new homes, thanks to an extensive network of support services.

How does it work?

City staff and contracted community agencies do extensive outreach to homeless people living in encampments, on city streets, and in other public spaces. Outreach workers help clients develop housing plans, providing assistance every step of the way—from obtaining identification documents and accessing income supports, to choosing where they want to live, looking at apartments, and finding furniture. The basic theory is that the best place to start addressing any issues you may have in your life is from the dignity and security of your own home.

Three requirements

Clients are given housing options so they can make informed decisions on the location and type of housing they want to live in. Only three rules apply to Streets to Homes clients:

- Rent gets paid directly to the landlord
- Clients must agree to follow-up supports once housed
- Clients must fill out an application for social housing. This is critical because many clients are paying more than the 30% of income that is the case with rent-geared-to-income units in social housing.

Homeless people want permanent homes

When we conducted the first Street Needs Assessment in April 2006, homeless people told us overwhelmingly they wanted permanent housing and the help to make this happen. This and other information collected is shaping the services available to help homeless people find and keep permanent housing.

Partnerships first

Streets to Homes is proving that many partners pulling together can deliver results even on the most challenging issues.

Shelter, Support and Housing Administration Division is working with community agencies, health care providers, and non-profit and private-sector landlords on a consistent and focussed plan to end street homelessness in Toronto.

Creating new solutions

Finding housing for people living on the streets has meant developing new solutions. Streets to Homes is adding new programs as needs arise.

Mobile Multi-disciplinary Street Outreach Team

A cross-functional team that outreach workers can refer to when faced with clients whose serious mental health or addiction issues are preventing them from choosing to access housing.

Post Incarceration Housing Program

A partnership that finds homes for homeless people leaving the criminal justice system.

Employment Supports

Newly housed people receive assessment that could lead to training to re-enter the labour force.

Fred Victor Centre's Rapid Access Pilot

Provides places for outreach workers to place clients requiring a three-month transitional period before moving into their permanent homes. Life skills training and other supports are provided during that period.

